

Message Text

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ACTION DLOS-02

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C O N F I D E N T I A L CARACAS 10474

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LIMDIS

FOR AMB RICHARDSON FROM AMB VAKY

EO 11652 GDS
TAGS: PLOS VE
SUBJ: LOS -- INTERSESSIONAL ACTIVITY: ANDRES AGUILAR
REF: STATE 253936

1. I SPOKE BRIEFLY TO AGUILAR ON OCT 25. HE SAID THAT HE HAS BEEN INVITED TO GENEVA BUT WILL NOT BE ABLE TO ATTEND, SINCE HE MUST BE IN WASHINGTON FOR THE INTER-AMERICAN HUMAN RIGHTS COMMISSION MEETINGS. THE GOV THINKS THE GENEVA MEETING IS IMPORTANT, HOWEVER, AND WANTS TO BE REPRESENTED. HENCE, VENEZUELA WILL MOST PROBABLY BE REPRESENTED THERE BY THE VENEZUELAN AMBASSADOR IN SPAIN, RUBEN CARPIO CASTILLO (A BIO CABLE ON HIM FOLLOWS). AGUILAR SAID HE IS LEAVING FOR WASHINGTON OCT 29 AND WILL BE IN WASHINGTON UNTIL MID-NOVEMBER. HE SAID HE WOULD BE DELIGHTED TO SEE YOU AND WOULD IN FACT LIKE TO INVITE YOU TO LUNCH. HE WILL BE STAYING AT THE MADISON IN WASHINGTON.

2. I THINK YOU SHOULD MAKE A POINT OF SEEING AGUILAR. IN CONNECTION WITH THAT AS WELL AS OUR TOTAL APPROACH TO
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VENEZUELA, LET ME LAY OUT IN SOME DETAIL THE FOLLOWING THREADS AND MY RECOMMENDATIONS:

3. THE GOV POSITION ON THE SEABEDS IS HARDENING IN FAVOR OF THE RADICAL POSITION. GENERALLY, ON ALL NORTH-SOUTH MATTERS THE GOV HAS ALIGNED ITSELF FIRMLY WITH THE G-77; A TOUGH AND UNIFIED G-77 POSITION AS THE ONLY

WAY TO FORCE CONCESSIONS FROM THE DEVELOPED WORLD IS A MAJOR STRATEGIC CONCEPT HERE. I ATTRIBUTE THIS TO THE ASENDCY IN DECISION-MAKING ON THESE MATTERS OF THE NEW FOREIGN MINISTER, SIMON ALBERTO CONSALVI AND, OF COURSE, PEREZ GUERRERO. BOTH HAVE STRONG INFLUENCE ON PRESIDENT PEREZ, WHO IS DISPOSED IN THIS DIRECTION ANYWAY. IN THE MATTER OF SEABEDS AND LOS GENERALLY, I THINK CONSALVI IS A KEY FIGURE, AND THEREFORE ONE ON WHOM WE SHOULD CONCENTRATE.

4. AGUILAR IS STILL AN IMPORTANT FIGURE IN ALL OF THIES, BUT HE DOES NOT HAVE THE DECISION-MAKING HORSEPOWER THAT CONSALVI HAS. (I MUST SAY THAT ID DO NOT KNOW WHAT AGULAR HIMSELF PERSONALLY THINS ABOUT THE SEABED ISSUE. BUT HE IS AN EFFECTIVE AND INTELLIGENT DIPLOMAT, AND HE CAN UNDERSTAND NEGOTIATION, EVEN IF HIS ROOM TO MANEUVER IS CIRCUMSCRIBED.) I AM FRANKLY INTRIGUED WITH WHY AGULAR IS NOT GOING TO GENEVA. I DO NOT KNOW IF HIS REASONS ARE REAL OR IF THERE HAS BEEN A DIMINUTION IN HIS POWER OR IN THE PEREZ ADMINISTRATION'S CONFIDENCE AND TRUST IN HIM. WE SHALL TRY TO EXPLORE THAT. I DO NOTE THAT CONSALVI IS VERY MUCH AN ACCION DEMOCRATICA (PARTY) MAN, AND TENDS TO TRUST PARTY STALWARTS MORE THAN NON-PARTY PEOPLE. AGUILAR IS ACTUALLY A COPEI (OPPOSITION PARTY) FIGURE, THOUGH NOT AN ACTIVE POLITICIAN. CARPIO CASTILLO, WHO IS GOING TO GENEVA, ON THE OTHER HAND, IS CONFIDENTIAL

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AN AD STALWART.

5. AS YOU KNOW, PRESIDENT PEREZ REACTED SHARPLY TO PUBLISHED STATEMENTS QUOTING YOU AS SAYING THAT THE US MAY WITHDRAW FROM THE LOS CONFERENCE. HIS REMARKS, WHICH WE HAVE REPORTED SEPARATELY, WERE SIGNIFICANT, AND I BELIEVE HE DELIBERATELY SOUGHT TO MAKE THEM A MATTER OF RECORD. BOTH HE AND CONSALVI HAVE INTERPRETED YOUR REMARKS AS BLACKMAIL. THEY ALSO TEND TO EQUATE THEM WITH TOTAL SUPPORT FOR THE MULTINATIONALS.

6. GIVEN THE PERSONALISTIC WAY IN WHICH LATINS OPERATE, WHAT THIS MEANS, IN ALL FRANKNESS, IS THAT BOTH THE PRESIDENT AND CONSALVI ARE NOW REACTING TO YOU. THEY NOW SEE YOU AS "MR HARD LINE," AND THIS DECREASES THEIR RECEPTIVITY FOR ARGUMENTS WHICH YOU PERSONALLY PRESENT. IN A PRIVATE CONVERSATION A FEW DAYS AGO WITH THE PRESIDENT AND CONSALVI, THEY BROUGHT UP THE LOS, AND PEREZ SAID HE THOUGHT YOU WERE TO INFLEXIBLE TO BE ABLE TO NEGOTIATE THIS ITEM. I TRIED TO EXPLAIN THE USG CONCERN, THE LIMITS TO OUR POSITIN, AND THAT IT WAS PRECISELY BECAUSE WE WANTED TO NEGOTIATE A COMPROMISE AND THE RADICAL

POSITION WAS TOO DOCTRINAIRE THAT YOU MADE YOUR STATEMENTS. HOWEVER, I DON'T THINK I MADE MUCH OF A DENT.

7. I HAVE DESCRIBED THE ABOVE IN TOTAL CANDOR BECAUSE I THINK IT IMPORTANT THAT YOU BE AWARE OF THESE NUANCES, AND TO EXPLAIN WHY I SUGGEST THE TACTICS I DO BELOW. I DO NOT WANT TO OVER-EMPHASIZE THESE NUANCES, HOWEVER. THE IMPORTANT ELEMENTS TO REMEMBER ARE: A) PEREZ AND CONSALVI FULLY BACK THE G-77 POSITION AND THE IDEA THAT THEY SHOULD PLAY HARDBALL WITH THE DEVELOPED WORLD AS A TACTIC FOR MAXIMIZING THEIR INTERESTS. B) PEREZ PARTICULARLY, BUT I THINK CONSALVI TOO, REALLY DO MISUNDERSTAND THE MEANING AND SIGNIFICANCE OF THE PROCEDURAL QUESTION AND ARE DISPOSED TO DISMISS THAT CONCERN

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AS A MANEUVER ON OUR PART. C) FINALLY, THEY WILL TEND TO MISTRUST YOUR ARGUMENTS. THIS DOES NOT, I BELIEVE, APPLY TO AGUILAR, WHO FULLY UNDERSTANDS WHAT YOU ARE SAYING AND WHAT THE PROBLEM IS. BUT I DO NOT THINK HE IS ALWAYS SUCCESSFUL IN PERSUADING PEREZ AND CONSALVI ON THESE THINGS.

8. I BELIEVE THAT CONSALVI IS A KEY HERE. I BELIEVE THAT THE MAJOR IMMEDIATE TASK IS TO CONVINCE HIM AND THE PRESIDENT OF THE SERIOUSNESS OF THE PROCEDURAL QUESTION, OF OUR DESIRE TO FIND A MIDDLE SOLUTION AND OF THE DANGER INTO WHICH SUCH A SETTLEMENT IS PLACED, NOT BY OUR POSITION BUT BY THE THIRD WORLD'S HARDENING POSITION.

9. TO DO THIS, I SUGGEST THE FOLLOWING: A) THAT YOU TALK TO AGUILAR IN WASHINGTON AND GO OVER THE PROBLEMS. HE IS STILL A KEY ACTOR, AND EVEN IF HE HAS NO FINAL DECISION-MAKING AUTONOMY, HIS PRESTIGE ALONE GIVES HIM INFLUENCE. B) THAT YOU MAKE A SPECIAL POINT OF CULTIVATING CARPIO CASTILLO IN GENEVA AND CONSULTING WITH HIM (NOTE THAT HE HAS AN M.A. FROM BOSTON UNIVERSITY). C) IN BROACHING THE QUESTION OF PROCEDURAL CHANGES, THEY SHOULD BE CLEARLY PUT FORTH AS AMERASINGH'S INITIATIVES, NOT OURS. TO THE EXTENT THE VENEZUELANS BELIEVE WE ARE SPONSORING OR DREAMING UP THE CHANGES THEY WILL BE SUSPICIOUS OF THEM. IT MAY EVEN BE DESIRABLE FOR AMERASINGH AND OTHER SYMPATHETIC G-77 NATIONS TO GO DIRECTLY TO THE VENEZUELANS THEMSELVES. D) I BELIEVE IT WOULD BE HIGHLY DESIRABLE TO HAVE A REASONED, COMPREHENSIVE WRITTEN MESSAGE OUTLINING THE US POSITION AND OBJECTIVES AND REQUESTING GOV COOPERATION GO DIRECTLY TO FOREIGN MINISTER CONSALVI FROM SECRETARY VANCE. I THINK A COMPREHENSIVE OUTLINE IS ESSENTIAL, AND I THINK A PERSONAL APPROACH OF

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THIS KIND FROM THE SECRETARY TO CONSALVI WILL DRIVE HOME
THE USG APPROACH. E) I HAVE NO DOUBT THAT PRESIDENT
PEREZ WILL RAISE LOS WITH PRESIDENT CARTER DURING THE
LATTER'S VISIT NOV 22. PEREZ EMPATHIZES VERY WELL WITH
PRESIDENT CARTER AND IS VERY RECEPTIVE TO WHAT THE PRESIDENT
SAYS. HENCE, HERE IS AN OPPORTUNITY TFOR A SUPERB
CHANNEL TO GET ACROSS ANY MESSAGE WE WANT. IN ANY CASE,
IT WILL BE IMPORTANT THAT PRESIDENT CARTER BE FULLY
BRIEFED ON THE SUBJECT.
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